

Message Text

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ATTN: FREDERICK SMITH, JR., DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR SCA

E. O. 116528 N/A

TAGS: CVIS, CA

SUBJ: VISAS (CUBAN NONIMMIGRANT VISA APPLICANTS)

1. SINCE EARLY DECEMBER 1973, THE POST HAS RECEIVED APPROXIMATELY 300 NONIMMIGRANT VISA APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY U.S. CITIZENS AND U.S. - RESIDENT CUBAN NATIONALS ON BEHALF OF CLOSE RELATIVES (PRIMARILY PARENTS AND/OR SIBLINGS) CURRENTLY RESIDENT IN CUBA. APPLICANTS ARE ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION OVER 50. ABOUT 260 OF THESE APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED THROUGH AN ENTERPRISING CANADIAN CONCERN IN MONTREAL CALLED THE MICHAELS FORWARDING COMPANY. THE REMAINDER HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED INDEPENDENTLY FROM INDIVIDUAL U.S. RESIDENTS. THE CONSULATE GENERAL, THROUGH OFFICIAL CANADIAN SOURCES, UNDERTOOK INVESTIGATION OF MICHAELS FORWARDING COMPANY WITH NEGATIVE RESULTS. ALTHOUGH MICHAELS ADVERTISES IN THE U.S. SPANISH-LANGUAGE PRESS AND TAKES FEES FOR ASSISTING INTERESTED U.S. RESIDENTS, THE COMPANY APPEARS TO BE OPERATING WITHIN RELEVANT FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

2. BACKGROUND: SINCE EXPO IN 1967, THE POST HAS PROCESSED A STEADY FLOW OF NIV APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY U.S. RESIDENTS ON BEHALF OF RELATIVES STILL IN CUBA. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE

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ALL PAST APPLICANTS WHO APPLIED IN ADVANCE REACHED MONTREAL AND WERE

FOUND ELIGIBLE FOR AND ISSUED NONIMMIGRANT VISAS.

3. THE VAST MAJORITY OF CUBANS IN 1967-1973 ARRIVED IN CANADA BY SHIP DIRECT FROM CUBA. IN PRESENT CASES MICHAELS FORWARDING COMPANY HAS INFORMED THE POST IT PLANS TO CHARTER FLIGHTS FROM HAVANA TO MONTREAL AND/OR TORONTO WHEN AND IF THE CONSULATE GENERAL COMPLETES ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS.

4. IT HAS BEEN PRACTICE FOR MANY YEARS THAT PARAKEET CHECK WOULD BE COMPLETED IN ADVANCE OF APPLICANT'S ARRIVAL MONTREAL DUE TIME REQUIRED FOR SUCH PROCESSING. ONLY ABOUT 50 PARAKEET CHECKS IN ABOVE CASES HAVE BEEN PROCESSED, HOWEVER, AS, ON FEBRUARY 12, 1974, THE DEPARTMENT INFORMED THE POST BY OM THAT NO FURTHER CASES WOULD BE PRE-PROCESSED. THIS ACTION WAS BASED ON MISTAKEN IMPRESSION THAT FEW APPLICANTS ACTUALLY ARRIVED IN CANADA TO COMPLETE VISA PROCESSING. (SEE PARA 2 ABOVE) DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED THAT THE POST PROCESS CUBAN NIV APPLICANTS BY TELEGRAM ON AD HOC BASIS WHEN AN APPLICANT SUBMITTED APPLICATION IN PERSON AFTER ARRIVAL IN MONTREAL. PROPOSAL UNREALISTIC SINCE IT WOULD ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO COST OF TRIP FOR BOTH APPLICANTS AND AMCIT OR RESIDENT RELATIVES WHO COME TO MONTREAL TO MEET AND ACCOMPANY CUBAN RELATIVES TO U.S.

5. THE POST BELIEVES THAT THE MAJORITY OF CUBAN APPLICANTS WILL BE ABLE TO LEAVE CUBA AND WILL PROBABLY COME TO CANADA WHETHER OR NOT THEIR APPLICATIONS ARE PROCESSED IN ADVANCE. IT ALSO SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS INCREASES WEEKLY.

6. QUESTIONS CONCERNING PROCESSING HAS NOT BEEN LIMITED TO INDIVIDUALS. A SPANISH LANGUAGE RADIO STATION IN MIAMI MADE INQUIRY AS WELL. UNLESS SOME DECISION IS TAKEN CONCERNING THE RESUMPTION OF PARAKEET CHECKS, IT IS BELIEVED THAT AN IMPORTANT AND POSSIBLY ADVERSE PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEM WILL DEVELOP.

7. RECOMMENDATION: THAT THE DEPARTMENT ADVISE THE CONSULATE GENERAL THAT ADVANCE PROCESSING OF PARAKEET CHECKS WILL BE RESUMED. DELAY IN PROCESSING PARAKEET CHECKS CAN ONLY LEAD TO INEVITABLE PRESSURES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND PROBABLY UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY.

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